

REMARKS

Reconsideration and withdrawal of all grounds of rejection are respectfully requested in view of the above amendments and the following remarks. Claims 1-6, 8, 17, 19-24 and 33 were rejected. Claims 25-32 were previously withdrawn by the Examiner from consideration. By entry of this amendment, claims 1, 17 and 33 have been amended. No claims have been cancelled and new claims 34-38 have been added. No new material has been added. Consequently, claims 1-6, 8, 17, 19-24 and 33-38 are pending.

Claims 17 and 33 were objected to by the Examiner because of various informalities. These claims have been amended pursuant to the Examiner's suggestions. Therefore, withdrawal of these objections is respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 3, 5, 8 and 23 are rejected under §103(a) as being unpatentable over Wilson et al (031) in view of Li (915). The undersigned respectfully disagrees and requests reconsideration of this rejection. Specifically, the combination of Wilson and Li (915) does not teach, suggest or disclose all features of claim 1.

Claim 1 is directed to a receiver lock for securing an object to a receiver. The lock includes a linear shaft having a first end and a second opposite end, and a locking head having a shaft insertion end and a key insertion end. The shaft insertion end is selectively coupled to the first end of the shaft. A stop member is located at the second end of the shaft. A protective covering partially encloses an axial length of the locking head and is located on the shaft insertion end of the locking head. The cover includes a hole for receiving the first end of the shaft and provides an interference fit with the shaft. (para. 034, lines 8-10).

The protective covering 134 of Wilson is constructed of foam and is designed to prevent rattling; it is implied by dampening. (Wilson, col. 6, lines 19, 33-34). Wilson does not teach, suggest or disclose a covering that provides an interference fit with the shaft. The covering member 231 cited by the Examiner in Li (915) includes threaded holes 232, teaching away from any type of interference. Li (915) does not teach, suggest or disclose a covering that provides an interference fit with the shaft. For at least this reason, claim 1 is not obvious in view of the

combination of Wilson and Li (915). Therefore, claim 1 is believed to be allowable and reconsideration of this rejection is respectfully requested. Further, dependent claims 3, 5, 8 and 23 are also allowable at least based on direct dependence on allowable independent claim 1.

Claims 1, 3, 5, 8 and 23 are rejected under §103(a) as being unpatentable over Wilson et al. in view of Li (915) as applied to claim 1 above, and further in view of Wyers (832). The undersigned respectfully disagrees and requests reconsideration of this rejection. Specifically, the combination of Wilson and Li (915) and Wyers (832) does not teach, suggest or disclose all features of claim 1.

As previously stated, neither Wilson et al nor Li (915) teach, suggest or disclose a covering that provides an interference fit with the shaft. Likewise, Wyers (832) does not teach, suggest or disclose a locking head covering that provides an interference fit with the shaft. Therefore, claim 1 is believed to be allowable and reconsideration of this rejection is respectfully requested. Further, dependent claims 3, 5, 8 and 23 are also allowable at least based on direct dependence on allowable independent claim 1.

Claims 17, 20-22, 24 and 33 are rejected under §103(a) as being unpatentable over Wilson et al. in view of Li and Signorelli et al. The undersigned respectfully disagrees and requests reconsideration of this rejection. Specifically, the combination of Wilson, Li and Signorelli does not teach, suggest or disclose all features of claim 17.

Claim 17 is directed to a receiver lock for securing a ball mount to a receiver. The lock includes a linear shaft, a locking head having a shaft insertion end and a key insertion end, the shaft insertion end selectively coupled to a first end of the shaft, and a stop member located at a second opposite end of the shaft. A protective covering includes a portion of the same diameter as a cylindrical outer peripheral surface of the locking head. Further, the covering includes a hole for receiving the first end of the shaft and provides an interference fit with the shaft. (para. 034, lines 8-10).

As previously stated, neither Wilson et al nor Li (915) teach, disclose or suggest a covering that provides an interference fit with the shaft. Likewise, Signorelli does not teach, suggest or disclose a covering that provides an interference fit with the shaft. Therefore, claim

17 is believed to be allowable and reconsideration of this rejection is respectfully requested. Further, dependent claims 20-22, 24 and 33 are also allowable at least based on direct dependence on allowable independent claim 17.

The Examiner has also made several rejections of other dependent claims. The remaining pending dependent claims are allowable at least based on direct or indirect dependence on allowable independent claims 1 and 17.

New dependent claims 34 and 35 are each directed to a protective covering which includes an internal groove that snaps into a corresponding groove on the outer peripheral surface of the locking head. This limitation is believed to be allowable.

New independent claim 36 is directed to a trailer locking assembly for securing a trailer hitch to a hitch ball. This claim is believed to be allowable. The locking assembly includes a trailer hitch, a hitch ball, a latch fixed to the trailer hitch and having an opening therethrough, a shaft and a locking head. The latch is rotatable to a closed position in contact with the hitch ball. The linear shaft has a first end and a second end. The first end is sized for insertion through the latch opening. The locking head has a shaft insertion end and a key insertion end. The shaft insertion end is selectively coupled to the first end of the shaft. A stop member is located at the second end of the shaft. A protective covering partially encloses an axial length of the locking head and is located on an outer edge of the shaft insertion end of the locking head. The covering has a hole for receiving the first end of the shaft and provides an interference fit with the shaft.

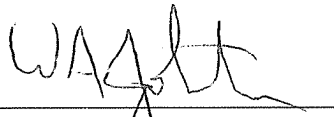
New dependent claims 37 and 38 are believed to be allowable at least based on direct dependence on allowable independent claim 36.

In view of the above amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that all pending claims of this application are in condition for allowance. Accordingly, a Notice of Allowance for all pending claims of this application is respectfully solicited. Furthermore, if the Examiner believes that additional discussions or information might advance the prosecution of

this application, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: 9/17/07



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